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www.douglascountywa.net (county government)

Ferry County

www.ferry-county.com (county government)
www.ferrycounty.com (tourism)

Okanogan County

www.okanogancounty.org (government)
www.okanogancountry.com (tourism)

Colville Confederated Tribes

www.colvilletribes.com

Border crossing

U.S. Customs Service: 509-476-2955
www.cbp.gov

U.S. Forest Service

• Okanogan and Wenatchee National Forests, www.fs.usda.gov/okawen/
• Colville National Forest, www.fs.usda.gov/colville

Lake Roosevelt National Recreation Area

• Water levels: U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, 800-824-4916
• Recreation area: 509-663-9441 or 509-738-6366
www.nps.go

Mountain passes

www.wsdot.com/travel/real-time/mountainpasses

North Cascades National Park

Information: 360-854-7200

Washington State Parks

www.parks.wa.gov

Department of Natural Resources

www.dnr.wa.gov

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Recreationland

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Poison Control Center	800-222-1222
Animal Poison Control Center	888-426-4435
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Grant County Health District	509-766-7960
Northeast Tri-County Health District	509-684-2262
Okanogan County Public Health	509-422-7140
Douglas County Sheriff's Office	509-884-0941
Chelan County Sheriff's Office	509-667-6851
Ferry County Sheriff's Office	509-775-3132
Grant County Sheriff's Office	509-762-1160
Okanogan County Sheriff's Office	509-422-7200
Okanogan County Emergency Management	509-422-7206
Washington State Patrol	360-596-4000

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The Chronicle staff strives to be accurate, however, all information in this publication is subject to change without notice.

THE CHRONICLE
Essential Reading
For Okanogan Country

Live, Work & Play in OROVILLE, WA

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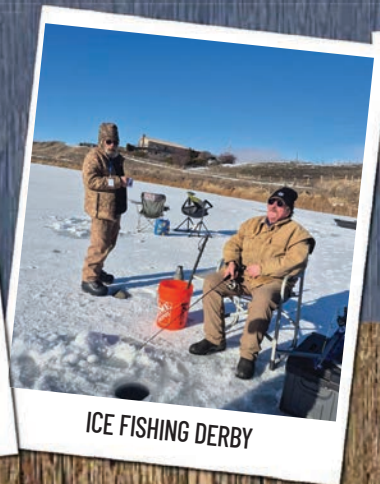
Molson Ice Fishing Derby - January 16, 2027
Chamber Banquet - February 6, 2027 (Date subject to change)
Spring Yard sale - April 17, 2027 (Date subject to change)
Oroville May Festival - May 8, 2027
Chesaw 4th of July Rodeo - July 4, 2027
Deep Bay Boom Fireworks - July 4, 2027
Lake Osoyoos Jet Ski Races - August 7-8, 2027
Fall Sidewalk Sale - September 18, 2027 (Date subject to change)
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OKANOGAN COUNTY
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Welcome

Welcome to Okanogan Country, where winter brings snow-covered mountains, groomed trails, outdoor adventures and small-town celebrations. From downhill skiing and snowmobiling to wildlife watching and ice fishing, the region offers plenty of ways to enjoy the colder months in the heart of North Central Washington.

Whether you travel north from Wenatchee along the Okanogan Trails Scenic Byway and International Discovery Loop or enter from Canada through Oroville, you'll find a region rich in history, culture and outdoor recreation.

For skiers and snowboarders, the Loup Loup Ski Bowl, located off Highway 20 between Okanogan and Twisp, offers downhill runs, powder, tubing and mountain views. Sitzmark Ski Hill near Havillah, northeast of Tonasket, provides another option for families and winter sports enthusiasts. Both ski areas offer chairlifts, food, equipment rentals and lessons.

Cross-country skiers can explore an extensive network of groomed trails throughout the Methow Valley and Okanogan Highlands, with additional opportunities in neighboring Ferry County. Okanogan Country promotes the region as home to more than 185 miles of groomed Nordic ski trails, including 125 miles in the Methow Valley alone. The Loup Loup South Summit Sno-Park offers 28.6 miles of trails, while the Highlands Sno-Park Winter Trails System near Havillah has 18.6 miles. The Ferry County Rail Trail provides another accessible option for skiers of varying abilities.

Snowmobilers can take advantage of trails used by all-terrain vehicles during warmer months, with local clubs and counties grooming routes for winter travel. Snowshoers will find plenty of places to explore at a slower pace, while Winthrop's town-owned ice rink offers opportunities for skating and hockey. Some residents and visitors even create their own skating rinks on frozen ponds and lakes.

Winter also offers opportunities to observe the region's abundant wildlife. Deer, elk, California bighorn sheep, bears, bobcats and cougars inhabit the area, while the rare Canada lynx lives primarily at higher elevations in and around Loomis State Forest. Mountain goats can sometimes be spotted in the Loomis and Chopaka areas. Bighorn sheep are often seen on the hillsides south of Oroville and around Loomis.

Birdwatchers and photographers can find subjects throughout the season. The Okanogan, Similkameen and Methow rivers attract waterfowl, bald eagles and great blue herons. Lost Lake is known for its population of common loons, while trumpeter swans regularly visit Forde and Conners lakes in the Sinlahekin Wildlife Area near Loomis, as well as stretches of the Okanogan River near Oroville and Tonasket. Falcons, hawks, osprey, owls and wild turkeys also inhabit the region. Although some wildlife migrates or hibernates during winter, many species remain active.

When conditions permit, ice fishing offers another way to get outdoors. Popular destinations include Osoyoos, Sidley, Bonaparte, Beaver, Beth, Davis, Cougar, Green and Palmer lakes.

Hunters also visit Okanogan County during fall and winter. Available game includes deer, elk, black bears, cougars, waterfowl, grouse, pheasants, quail, turkeys, chukars, Hungarian partridges and doves.

Washington state sno-park permits are required at designated sno-parks and are available through authorized vendors and state park resources.

Each January, Conconully and Republic hosts outhouse races, featuring teams racing privies mounted on skis.

Communities throughout Okanogan and Methow valleys celebrate the season with holiday light displays, Santa visits, parades, bazaars and other community gatherings. Some parades even feature illuminated farm equipment. Winter also brings arts and cultural events, including orchestra and chorus performances, theater productions and youth ballet.

In Okanogan Country, winter is not a season to hibernate. It's a chance to discover snowy trails, watch wildlife, enjoy small-town traditions and experience the region's wide-open spaces in a different light. Bundle up, get outside and find your own way to enjoy the season.



Outdoors & Recreation

Folks who live in and visit Okanogan Country know that winter is a great time to be outside enjoying the area's winter sports.

SNOWMOBILING

Okanogan Country offers a variety of snowmobiling opportunities through pristine forests, wide-open high desert and groomed trails in snow that's first class.

Nearly 400 miles of groomed snowmobile trails exist in Okanogan County alone, running out of Sno-Parks sprinkled throughout the county. In the greater Okanogan Country area lie hundreds more miles of trails in mountains and flatter countryside.

Some trails are maintained by snowmobile groups or private resorts, and others are groomed by Okanogan County, which also opens some roads to snowmobilers. Some of those roads are dual-use roads, meaning motorists and snowmobiles share the road and need to watch out for each other.

Many areas feature cabins and shelters where visitors can rest.

CROSS COUNTRY SKIING

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try skiing - good weather, cold snow, exceptional terrain and great grooming.

Snowfall generally is moderate and dependable. Snow usually falls a few inches at a time and generally stays around.

Okanogan Country Nordic ski terrain is gentle, open and varied. Trails follow rivers and streams, cross spacious fields and explore narrow coulees.

Some are in dense forest, others open ridge tops. Flat, rolling or steep, these trails are inviting, interesting and fun to ski.

Every turn and twist of the trail opens up new breathtaking vistas.

There are more than 260 kilometers (about 161 miles) of groomed trails in Okanogan Country.

Popular areas include the community and Sun Mountain trail systems in the Methow Valley and the Highlands area east of Tonasket.

The Boulder Pass area between Curlew and Orient, in Ferry County, features groomed cross country trails, and can be reached from the Boulder Pass interpretive center/information site. The Ferry County Rail Trail, built on a former railroad bed, runs from the Republic area northward, and includes a trek across Curlew Lake via a trestle.

Skiers should check with national forest offices to make sure forest areas are open; some popular areas burned in 2014 and 2015 wildfires and may have restricted access.

DOWNHILL SKIING AND SNOWBOARDING

Downhill skiing and snowboarding - with chairlifts to whisk you quickly to the top - also are available at the Loup Loup Ski Bowl, off Highway 20 between Okanogan and Twisp, and Sitzmark Ski Area, off Havillah Road northeast of Tonasket.

Lift prices are modest and there are practically no lines.

Skiers who want a bit more adventure can try North Cascades heli-skiing, a type of downhill skiing where a helicopter deposits skiers and a guide atop a 7,000- to 9,000-foot mountain for an exhilarating run down pristine snow. Vertical drops range from 1,500 to 4,000 feet.

More information is available at www.heli-ski.com.

MORE FUN IN THE SNOW

Other winter activities include dogsledding, ice skating, snowshoeing, ice fishing, sleigh riding, sledding, outhouse







racing in Conconully and Republic, snowshoe softball and bird watching.

• Sled dog and ski-joring teams frequently train on the roads and trails of Okanogan Country. The area west of Conconully is a favorite area.

• Ice skaters can clear off a spot on any number of frozen lakes, or can try out the conditions at the Winthrop Ice and Sports Rink, 208 White Ave.

A refrigeration system allows the rink to remain open even when the temperature rises a bit above freezing. The rink welcomes skaters of all skill levels; lessons are available.

Figure skaters and hockey players all will find the ice to their liking.

• Snowshoe enthusiasts can try out a variety of trails and areas throughout Okanogan Country, including the Methow Valley trail system, Highlands, Ferry County Rail Trail and other areas.

For beginners, Beaver Loop in the Methow Valley, offers a gentle hike that meanders through cedar and cottonwood trees. Another popular outing is a Rader Creek, also in the Methow Valley.

The Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest hosts a series of snowshoe/nature treks in the Methow Valley.

• For those who like to drop a line in the water and try their hand at winter fishing, many county lakes are open for winter seasons or all year round.

In addition, some streams are open for winter fishing.

Locations and rules are available in fishing regulations pamphlets available from the state Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Colville Confederated Tribes' Department of Fish and Wildlife.

• Folks who prefer to sit back and glide along through the frozen countryside using real horsepower can find sleigh rides available, usually during community festivals or through lodging facilities.

• Sledding is another favorite winter pastime in Okanogan Country. Favorite hills include the Curtis Sheep Slaughter area off Highway 20 southwest of Okanogan, Peacock Meadows Sno-Park near Conconully and the tubing area of Loup Loup Ski Bowl off Highway 20 between Okanogan and Twisp.

• Competitive outhouse racing – using privies on skis – is offered in mid-January in Conconully and Republic. People come from all over the Northwest – and sometimes abroad – to compete and watch the spectacle.

• Bird watching is a favorite activity all year, but winter watching offers the added quiet and solitude that only a snow-blanketed landscape can bring.

Bald eagles are especially satisfying to spy; they favor bare tree branches along the area's riverbanks.

The Audubon Society hosts Christmas bird counts all over the region. More information is available from North Central Washington Audubon Society, www.ncwaudubon.org.

• Fat-biking. Bicycles outfitted with snow-friendly fat tires can take off on a variety of cross country and specially groomed bike trails.

Popular areas include the Methow Valley trail system, Pearrygin Lake State Park and the Nordic area at Loup Loup Ski Bowl off Highway 20 between Okanogan and Twisp.

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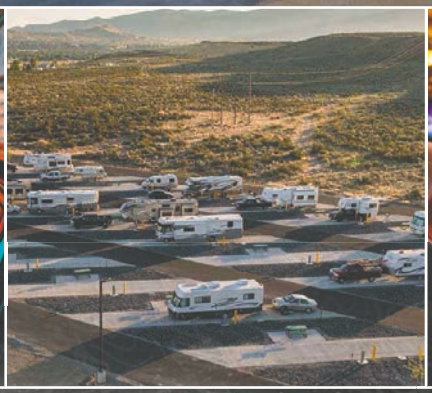
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LEARN MORE

Ski the slopes



Winter in the Okanogan Valley offers opportunities for skiers of all skill levels, from family-friendly community hills to groomed downhill runs and miles of Nordic trails.

LOUP LOUP SKI BOWL

Located between Okanogan and Twisp, Loup Loup Ski Bowl offers affordable skiing with views of the surrounding mountains. From Okanogan, take Highway 20 west for about 20 miles to reach the ski area, which traditionally opens in December.

The ski bowl features 1,240 vertical feet and 10 runs for all skill levels, served by a fixed-grip quad chairlift, a platter surface lift and a beginner rope tow. Runs are groomed nightly.

Cross-country skiers can explore 23 kilometers of groomed Nordic trails on Bear Mountain. Another 50 kilometers of trails are available about two miles away at the Washington State Parks South Summit Sno-Park.

For more information about the area, visit okanogancountry.com.

SITZMARK SKI HILL

For generations, Sitzmark Ski Hill has been a winter gathering place for families across the Okanogan Valley. Located near Havillah, east of Tonasket, the community-run hill offers a traditional small-town skiing experience, where a rope tow, warm cocoa and time on the slopes create lasting family memories.

Founded in 1951 by a group of local ranchers, Sitzmark originally operated behind the Wauconda Store. The hill traditionally opens the day after Christmas, giving families a chance to enjoy the snow together during winter break.





North County

From ice fishing and snowy trails to holiday festivals and historic landmarks, Okanogan County's northern communities offer plenty of reasons to visit during the winter months.

Oroville, the county's northernmost city, sits about four miles south of the Canadian border, where the Oroville-Osoyoos crossing is the only 24-hour border crossing in Eastern Washington. With the scenic Okanogan Highlands to the east and lakes and rivers to the west, Oroville is a convenient base for exploring the region.

South of town, the Whistler Canyon trailhead connects to the Pacific Northwest National Scenic Trail, which stretches from the Continental Divide to the Pacific Coast. Oroville marks the trail's midpoint. The Similkameen River Trail offers another option, following the former Great Northern Railroad route for a seven-mile hike toward Enloe Dam. The Similkameen River was the site of Washington's first gold strike, known as Rich Bar. Both trails offer opportunities for hiking, snowshoeing and horseback riding, while the Similkameen River Trail is also suitable for cross-country skiing.

Winter anglers can try their luck on Osoyoos Lake near Oroville, where perch are among the commonly caught fish. Beaver and Beth lakes near Chesaw offer additional fishing opportunities.

One of the area's signature winter events is the annual Molson Ice Fishing Derby, scheduled for Jan. 16, 2027, on Sidley Lake in Molson. Hosted by the Oroville Chamber of Commerce with help from the Molson Grange, the event attracts anglers from across the Pacific Northwest and southern British Columbia. Youth and adult competitions offer prizes, while the Molson Grange Hall hosts arts and crafts vendors, music, raffles, bingo and other activities. The chamber also organizes downtown Halloween trick-or-treating and a Christmas tree lighting and parade on the first Saturday in December.

South of Oroville, Tonasket offers another gateway to winter recreation. With just over 1,100 residents, the town sits in an agricultural region known for apples, cattle and timber, about 20 miles south of the Canadian border. Its surrounding lakes and forests pro-









vide opportunities for fishing and exploring the outdoors.

About 25 miles east of Tonasket, Bonaparte Lake is a popular winter destination surrounded by evergreen forests at the foot of Bonaparte Mountain. FishingBooker.com ranked it the No. 2 ice fishing destination in the nation in 2023. Anglers can target brook, kokanee, lake and rainbow trout, as well as smallmouth bass. The lake is also known for tiger trout, including the site of Washington's state-record catch.

The Bonaparte Lake Ice Fishing Festival is scheduled for Jan. 23, 2027, one week after the Molson derby. Nearby Sno-Park trails and opportunities for skate skiing offer additional ways to enjoy the winter landscape.

West of Tonasket, Palmer Lake near Loomis is another destination for freshwater ice fishing, attracting experienced anglers and visitors looking for a quiet day outdoors.

Winter celebrations bring the community together in Tonasket, too. Winterfest is scheduled for Dec. 4-5, 2026, featuring a community tree lighting, Santa's arrival, craft vendors and family-friendly activities.

Together, Oroville and Tonasket offer a mix of outdoor adventure, local history and community traditions, making North County a destination for visitors looking to experience winter in North Central Washington.







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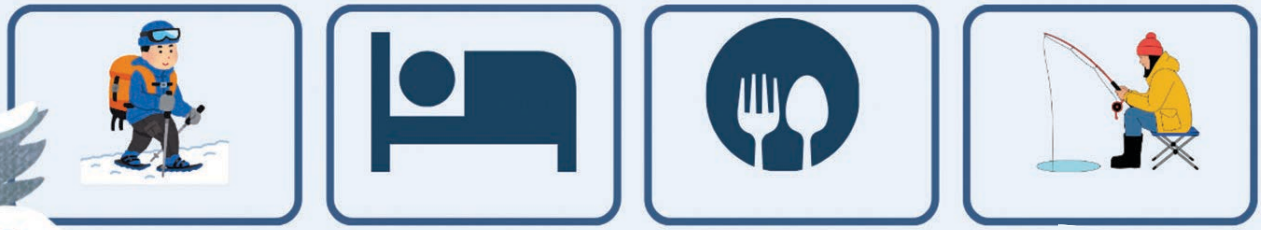






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Ferry County

Republic is an excellent base for exploring the area's vast network of trails. With numerous Sno-Parks nearby, including Deer Creek, Sherman Pass, and Albian Hill, winter enthusiasts can enjoy miles of groomed and backcountry trails. The Ferry County Rail Trail offers a scenic and easy-to-access option for beginners, perfect for a crisp winter hike or cross-country ski. For a more challenging adventure, the ungroomed trails at Sherman Pass are popular with backcountry skiers and snowshoers. Ice fishing is also a popular activity on Curlew Lake, though visitors are advised to check ice conditions with the park ranger before venturing out.

Just north of Republic, the quaint, quiet community of Curlew offers a more secluded and tranquil winter escape, primarily centered around its namesake, Curlew Lake. Here, you'll find the serene Curlew Lake State Park, a peaceful spot for wildlife viewing and easy access to the frozen lake's surface for ice fishing. The handful of resorts and lodges in the area offer cozy, cabin-style accommodations, allowing visitors to completely immerse themselves in the silence and beauty of the frozen landscape.

The town's historic Clark Avenue is the main thoroughfare, lined with local shops, restaurants, and inns. The annual Republic Winterfest, held in January, is a major highlight, promising free family fun. This festive event kicks off with a light parade and continues with quirky events like K-9 keg pulls, outhouse races, and a chili contest. It's a true celebration of the community and the winter season. The Republic Brewing Company is a local favorite, hosting a variety of events like trivia and live music throughout the winter.

For those who prefer indoor activities, Republic has a fascinating history to explore. The Stonerose Interpretive Center and Eocene Fossil Site is a world-renowned destination where visitors can learn about the area's prehistoric past. Though the outdoor fossil beds may be covered in snow, the interpretive center remains a captivating stop. You can also visit the Ferry County Historical Society Museum and the historic Slagle House Museum (though some may be closed during the winter season, check their schedules in advance).

Republic's unique blend of outdoor adventure and rich history makes it a special place to experience the magic of a Washington winter.













Mid-County

Discover Omak, Okanogan and Conconully

Okanogan County's mid-valley area (Omak, Okanogan and Conconully) offer visitors a mix of history, community events, shopping, dining and outdoor recreation in the heart of Okanogan County.

Each community provides a different way to experience the region, from exploring local museums to enjoying winter sports in the surrounding mountains.

Omak serves as a hub for exploring the county, with a variety of services, restaurants, shops and cultural activities. The Okanogan Valley Orchestra and Chorus presents concerts and musicals throughout the year, providing opportunities to enjoy local music and performances.

Downtown Omak offers shopping at local businesses and dining options ranging from quick bites to sit-down meals. Seasonal events bring residents and visitors together, with the Zombie Run and Halloween Harvest Festival among the October festivities. As the Christmas season approaches, downtown provides an opportunity to browse local shops for gifts and other finds.

Nearby, Okanogan, the county seat, offers a look at the area's history and heritage. The Okanogan County Museum features exhibits documenting the county's past, including photographs by frontier photographer Frank Matsura. Visitors can explore a replica of an early 1900s Old West town, see the original firehouse and view outdoor displays of historic farm equipment.

The museum grounds also include a log cabin built in 1879, believed to be the oldest standing structure in the Okanogan. The community hosts seasonal events, including the Harvest Festival and Pet Parade in October and the Okanogan Farm Lights Festival in December. For more information about local events and activities, visit okchamber.com.

For those seeking winter recreation, Conconully offers snowmobiling, snowshoeing, ice fishing and hunting in a mountain setting. Surrounded by state and national forests, the area provides access to extensive snowmobile trails maintained with help from the Butt Busters Snowmobile Club. Riders can explore forested routes and take in views of the surrounding landscape.

Conconully Lake and Conconully Reservoir are stocked annually with rainbow trout, making them destinations for anglers during the winter ice-fishing season. Wildlife, including deer, can also be spotted around the community and surrounding countryside.

After a day outdoors, visitors can stop at local stores and restaurants. One of the town's signature winter events is the annual Outhouse Race in January, when competitors race outhouses mounted on skis down the main street as spectators cheer them on.







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South County

Quad Cities offer winter recreation and small-town charm

Winter brings a quieter pace to the Quad Cities of Brewster, Bridgeport, Pateros and Mansfield, where the Columbia River winds through agricultural valleys and rolling hills provide a scenic backdrop for seasonal adventures.

Brewster sits at the confluence of the Okanogan and Columbia rivers, a scenic setting even after the busy boating season ends. Winter anglers can explore fishing opportunities along the rivers, while the surrounding countryside offers views of orchards, open fields and snow-dusted hills.

North of Brewster, Bridgeport offers access to the Columbia River and Rufus Woods Lake, where fishing remains a draw during colder months. Nearby Bridgeport State Park provides a different perspective on the landscape in winter, with open spaces and shoreline views along the reservoir behind Chief Joseph Dam.

South of Brewster, Pateros sits where the Methow and Columbia rivers meet. While summer brings boating and swimming, winter offers a quieter opportunity to enjoy the waterfront, watch for wildlife and take in the river valley's seasonal scenery. Pateros also provides a gateway to the Methow Valley, where visitors can continue toward mountain communities and winter recreation areas.

East of the river communities, Mansfield offers a glimpse of rural life on the open plateau of Douglas County. Surrounded by wheat fields, rolling hills and expansive skies, the small farming community provides a peaceful destination for a winter drive.

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Winter Adventures in Methow Valley

Winter transforms the Methow Valley into a destination for snow-covered trails, mountain views and outdoor adventure. From cross-country skiing and snowshoeing to downhill runs, fat biking and ice fishing, the valley offers plenty of ways to enjoy the colder months, with small-town communities providing a warm welcome after a day outside.

Cross-country skiing is a winter centerpiece. The Methow Trails system connects communities, forests and open landscapes with an extensive network of groomed routes for classic skiing and skate skiing. Trails around Winthrop, Mazama and the surrounding valley offer options for beginners and experienced skiers alike. Rentals and lessons help newcomers get started, while seasoned skiers can spend hours exploring the region's winter scenery.

For downhill skiing and snowboarding, Loup Loup Ski Bowl, between Okanogan and Twisp, offers mountain terrain for a day on the slopes.

Snowshoeing provides another way to explore the winter landscape. Snow-covered trails and forest roads offer opportunities to take in mountain views and spot animal tracks along the way. Fat biking on designated snow routes adds another option for visitors who want to explore on two wheels.

Families can make the most of snowy days with sledding and tubing, while snowmobiling offers access to a broader winter landscape where permitted. Visitors should check local trail access, grooming reports, weather and road conditions before heading out.

Winter anglers can also find opportunities for ice fishing when conditions allow. Ice thickness and safety vary, so anglers should check current conditions and local regulations rather than assume a frozen surface is safe.

For a break from the trails, Winthrop's Western-themed downtown offers shops, restaurants and places to warm up. At the Winthrop Rink, visitors can enjoy ice skating and other rink activities, making it an appealing stop for families and groups looking to mix



outdoor adventures with time in town. Nearby Mazama provides a quieter mountain setting, while Twisp offers additional dining, shopping and arts opportunities.

Whether the plan is a full day on groomed ski trails, a snowshoe trek through the trees, a snowmobile ride or a relaxed afternoon exploring downtown, the Methow Valley offers a winter getaway built around fresh air, scenic landscapes and small-town charm. Dress for changing mountain conditions, check local reports before departing and leave time to enjoy the communities that make the valley a year-round destination.





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Winter safety across Okanogan County

Winter brings many opportunities for outdoors recreation. But changing weather, icy roads, freezing temperatures and unpredictable snow conditions make preparation an important part of every winter outing.

Whether traveling mountain highways, heading to a frozen lake or venturing into the backcountry, visitors can enjoy the season more safely by checking conditions, carrying the right equipment and knowing when to change plans.

CHECK ROAD CONDITIONS BEFORE TRAVELING

Winter weather can change quickly across the Okanogan and Methow valleys, particularly at higher elevations and mountain passes. Snow, ice, drifting snow and reduced visibility can make driving difficult, even when conditions are clear at the start of a trip.

Before leaving, check the state Department of Transportation's travel information at wsdot.com/travel, including pass reports, road closures, traction requirements and chain restrictions. Allow extra time, reduce speed, increase following distance and avoid sudden braking or steering on slippery roads.

Drivers should carry an emergency kit with warm clothing, blankets, water, food, a flashlight, a first-aid kit, a phone charger and basic supplies. Keep the vehicle's fuel tank adequately filled, clear snow and ice from windows and lights, and make sure tires are suitable for winter driving.

STAY SAFE ON THE SLOPES

Before heading out to the local ski hill, check operating schedules, weather forecasts and current mountain conditions.

Wear a properly fitted helmet, use equipment appropriate for your ability, and follow posted signs and trail closures. Stay on designated runs, maintain control and give other skiers and snowboarders room. Beginners should start on easier terrain and consider lessons before attempting steeper runs.

Cold temperatures and wind can increase the risk of frostbite and hypothermia. Dress in layers, protect exposed skin and take breaks indoors when needed. Watch for numbness, unusual fatigue, confusion or persistent shivering, and seek warmth promptly if symptoms develop.

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USE CAUTION ON FROZEN LAKES

Ice fishing can be a rewarding way to spend a winter day, but frozen water presents hazards that are not always visible from shore. Ice thickness can vary across a lake because of currents, springs, changing water levels, snow cover and temperature fluctuations.

There is no guarantee that a frozen lake is safe simply because other people are on it. Check local conditions before venturing out, and do not rely on the appearance of the ice alone.

Bring ice picks or other appropriate self-rescue equipment, wear a flotation device designed for cold-water conditions and tell someone where you plan to fish and when you expect to return. Avoid going alone, keep a safe distance from others on the ice and stay away from inlets, outlets and areas with moving water.

If someone falls through the ice, call 911 and avoid rushing onto the ice yourself. Reach or throw a rope or other flotation aid from a safe position if possible, and follow emergency dispatchers' instructions.

RIDE SNOWMOBILES RESPONSIBLY

Okanogan County's mountains and forested areas attract snowmobilers looking for groomed routes and backcountry adventure. Riders should check trail and grooming reports, weather forecasts, avalanche conditions and land-access restrictions before departing.

Use designated routes where required, respect private property and posted closures, and ride at a speed appropriate for visibility, terrain and experience. Never ride alone in remote areas, and make sure someone knows the route and expected return time.

Carry navigation tools, a first-aid kit, emergency shelter, extra clothing, food, water and communication equipment. A phone may not have service in remote areas, so consider a satellite communicator or other emergency device.

Snowmobilers traveling in avalanche terrain should obtain current forecasts from the Northwest Avalanche Center at nwac.us, carry a beacon, probe and shovel, and know how to use them. Equipment alone does not replace avalanche education or sound decisions. When conditions are dangerous, choose a different route or activity.

PREPARE FOR COLD-WEATHER ADVENTURES

Snowshoeing, winter hiking, tubing and other outdoor activities can take visitors away from roads, buildings and reliable cell service. Check the forecast, choose a route that matches the group's experience and daylight hours, and bring more food, water and warm clothing than expected to be necessary.

Dress in layers that can be adjusted during activity, protect hands and feet, and keep spare dry clothing available. Avoid sweating heavily in cold weather, as damp clothing can accelerate heat loss. Turn back if weather worsens, visibility drops or anyone in the group becomes cold, tired or uncomfortable.

Hypothermia can develop when the body loses heat faster than it can produce it. Warning signs include shivering, confusion, slurred speech and loss of coordination. Frostbite commonly affects fingers, toes, ears and noses. Seek shelter and medical help when symptoms are serious.







This publication is funded by the Okanogan County Hotel/Motel Lodging Tax Fund

Winter Recreation Map

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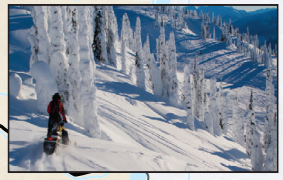
Map Legend

- Major Roads
- Secondary Roads
- Towns
- Rivers
- Lakes
- Nordic Ski
- Snowmobile Sno-Park
- Alpine Ski & Snowboard
- Ice Skate & Sport Rink
- Winter Fishing
- Snowshoeing
- Sleigh Rides
- Tube, Sled
- Heli-Ski
- Airports
- Border Crossing

Public Lands

- United States Forest Service
- Colville Indian Reservation
- State Dept of Natural Resources
- State Dept of Wildlife Land
- Bureau of Land Management
- Colville National Forest

Osoyoos, Osoyoos Lake, Nighthawk, Oroville, Palmer Lake, Sidley Lake, Molson, Chesaw, Midway, Grand Forks, Danville, Curlew, Malo, Deer Creek Nordic, Eden Valley Guest Ranch, Sitzmark Ski Hill, Beaver & Beth Lake, Loomis, Havillah, Highland SnoPark, Lake Bonaparte, Empire Lake, Ellisforde, Tonasket, Wauconda, West Fork Trout Creek, Republic, Swan Lake, Yellowjacket, North Cascade Heli, Goat Creek, Eightmile, Kerr, Methow Trails, Early Winters, Mazama, Boulder Creek, Conconully, Hess Lake, Riverside, Crawfish, Methow Trails, Winthrop Rink, Davis, Cougar & Campbell Lake, Peacock Meadows, Winthrop, Green Lake, Omak, Sun Mountain Lodge, Spring Creek Ranch, Loup Loup Ski Area, North Summit, Twisp, Twisp River, Poorman Creek, South Summit Sno-Park, Okanogan, Malott, Carlton, Rat Lake, Highland Stage Co., Nespelem, South Fork Gold Creek, Methow, Monse, Brewster, Keller, Pateros, Bridgeport, Elmer City, Black Canyon, Chief Joseph Dam, Coulee Dam, Grand Coulee, Electric City








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Okanogan County Tourism Council

Washington Winter Ice Fishing

Your Guide to a Safe and Fun Trip

The fishing season doesn't end just because the lakes freeze over. Winter provides a unique and exciting opportunity for families to get outside and ice fish for trout, perch, and crappie. While it's an accessible and rewarding activity, safety is the most important factor. Remember, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) does not monitor ice conditions, so always be prepared.

Essential Gear

Most of the gear you need, you may already have!

• **Valid Fishing License:** This is the first essential piece of gear.

• **Fishing Rod**: A standard rod works, but specialized ice fishing rods are very affordable.

• **A Bucket:** A simple bucket is perfect for holding your gear and doubles as a seat.

• **Auger or Chainsaw**: Necessary for drilling through the ice, along with a scoop to keep the hole clear of slush.

Prioritizing Safety

Ice conditions can be hard to read, and hypothermia can set in quickly. To ensure a safe trip:

• **Confirm Ice Thickness: Never walk on ice that is less than four inches thick**. Use an auger, spud bar, or chainsaw to check the depth as you move away from the shore.



• **Never Fish Alone**: Always bring a friend or family member.

• **Stay Spread Out**: Distribute weight evenly across the ice by keeping your distance from others.

• **Bring Rescue Gear**: Carry inexpensive items like **ice picks and a floating rope**. They can be life-saving tools in an emergency.

• **Prepare for the Worst**: Always have a **spare change of clothes** and a **rescue plan** in place before you head out.

With a little preparation and caution, you can enjoy a memorable and fun-filled day on the ice.









RIDE SAFE. STAY SAFE.

SNOWMOBILING SAFETY CHECKLIST

WEAR A HELMET & GEAR
Head protection, layers, insulated gear

CHECK CONDITIONS & WEATHER
Review forecasts, warnings, avalanche risk

STAY ON MARKED TRAILS
Avoid private property, open water, thin ice

RIDE SOBER
Never operate under the influence

CARRY ESSENTIALS
Emergency kit, tools, navigation

KNOW YOUR EQUIPMENT
Check lights, brakes, fluid levels before riding

NEVER RIDE ALONE
Use the buddy system, share your plan



PLAN. PREPARE. PROTECT.

Enjoy the Ride Responsibly. Be a Safe Rider!





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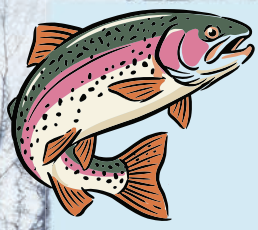
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